

REMARKS

The undersigned discussed the outstanding Office Action with the Examiner during a telephone conversation on January 14, 2008. The undersigned pointed out that while the Office Action summary indicated that all pending claims were rejected, the body of the rejection only listed claims 1-8, 15, 17 and 18 as being rejected. The Examiner confirmed that all claims should have been rejected.

During a second conversation with the Examiner on January 29, 2008, the undersigned pointed out to the Examiner that a certified translation of the priority document was on file with the Patent Office before the outstanding Office Action was mailed and, therefore, that Itoh et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,108,904) is not a reference that can be used to support the Examiner's rejections. The Examiner agreed and stated that the finality of the last rejection would be removed and that this response would be entered.

Since Itoh is no longer a reference, the rejection of the Examiner is moot. However, in order to expedite prosecution, the Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 20 to more fully distinguish the other cited references.

It is desirable in the field of the present invention to have as narrow hook strip as possible, and in particular in the range of 3 to 10 mm. However, the realities of manufacturing such a narrow hook strip range require that the sealing at the interface between the walls and the ledge regions be good. If one were to start from the overmold described in Hattori and simply make it on a small scale so that the width of the hook strip was in the 3 to 10 mm range, the sealing would not be good enough. As soon as a single drop of foam would enter the cavity, it would pollute the hooks widthwise and would make at least a portion of the hooks inoperable as hooks in a hook and loop arrangement.

If one were to then turn to Fleuchaus and add a magnet and a metallic resin, one would still not obtain the article of the present invention. This is because the ledge portions which are flat and parallel to the hook strip are very small in Fleuchaus, and therefore the sealing would not be sufficiently

enhanced. Also, the positioning of the article on top of the cavity in the bottom of the mold would be complicated because of the very small straight ledge portions which would require a user to precisely place the article relative to the cavity.

With the present invention, an improved article with a very small hook strip width (this is desirable in the final molded seat) was created which is also very easy to position on top of the cavity in the bottom of the mold before the pouring of the foam. Even if a user slightly misaligns the article with respect to the cavity, the article will still be properly formed because the wide ledge parts and relatively narrow hook strip would improve the sealing. Also, the present invention eliminates the need for using prior art lips, dams, foil, foam pads and the like to protect the hooks during the pouring of the foam.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicant believes that claims 1-8 and 12-20 are in condition for allowance and the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If any further issues remain after this amendment, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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